

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA  
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Chairman Chabot, Ranking Member Ackerman, Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me here today to discuss U.S. policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan. I serve as a Deputy to Ambassador Marc Grossman, the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan who was appointed last month. I am also happy to appear today with Assistant Secretary Bob Blake, and my colleagues from USAID with whom SRAP works closely on our whole-of-government effort.

We face grave threats to our vital interests in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, as a result of the significant civilian and military resources that President Obama requested and Congress approved since 2009, al-Qaeda's core leadership in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region is under pressure as never before, the Taliban's momentum has been reversed in Afghanistan's south, and the Pakistani government is increasingly exerting control over its territory.

The President's FY 2012 budget outlines the resources required to build on these gains, achieved through the sacrifice of our military and civilian personnel serving in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Today I want to briefly frame the way forward, and explain how we intend to utilize the resources the President requested to reinforce the progress of the military and civilian surges, while also launching a political process aimed at splitting the Taliban from al-Qaeda. This "diplomatic surge," would bring the Afghan conflict to an end, further our core goal of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al-Qaeda, and help stabilize the region.

First Afghanistan, where alongside our military, more than 1,100 civilians are working to bolster the Afghan government and lay a foundation for sustainable economic growth that will undercut the insurgency. Assisting us is a broad coalition, including 46 Muslim and non-Muslim nations that form the International Contact Group, which met with the Organization of the Islamic Conference on March 3, 2011 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. We are at the high water mark of the military effort and, as President Karzai announced on March 22, we are preparing to transition provinces and districts to an Afghan lead that include roughly 25

percent of Afghanistan's population. This will advance the transition plan agreed to at the Lisbon Summit in November and that President Obama reaffirmed in his December policy review. We look forward to combat troop reductions starting in July and continuing based on conditions on the ground, with transition to Afghan security lead completed by the end of 2014. As we have long said, the Afghans must take responsibility for their own future.

With our Allies and partners, the United States will realign our civilian and military resources in these provinces to support the Afghan government's increasing responsibility for security and the delivery of other essential services to its citizens. Our civilians will continue to support the stabilization mission, but will also focus increasingly on developing the capacity of critical Afghan government institutions. As General Petraeus testified, retreating from our civilian surge in Afghanistan—with our troops still in the field and the hand-off to Afghan security lead just getting underway—would be a grave mistake. During transition, State, USAID, and our civilians from eight other agencies will shoulder increased responsibilities. Without a fully resourced State and USAID role in Afghanistan, hard-earned progress by our troops and civilians will be put at risk.

Equally important is our civilian assistance to Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation with deep ties and strong interests in Afghanistan. We are broadening our partnership and focusing on shared threats, as well as addressing Pakistan's political and economic challenges. Since 2009, we have worked with the Pakistani government and the Pakistani people, including through our enhanced Strategic Dialogue process, which met last year three times at the Ministerial level. This has refocused assistance on Pakistan's urgent energy and economic needs and coordinated our efforts against violent extremist organizations. Even as we've had serious challenges to the relationship, some of which have made headlines, we've continued civilian and military efforts throughout the country and even expanded our cooperation.

Some of these significant challenges must still be overcome in our relationship with Pakistan, as distrust lingers on both sides. As recent events underscore, we need to work together carefully to prevent misunderstandings and disagreements from derailing progress. But it is critical that we remain engaged in Pakistan and help its democratically-elected leaders as they work to address the myriad of domestic challenges they face, whether on religious freedom or economic policy.

So far, Pakistan's leaders have taken some steps to address these problems, including enacting economic reforms. But the test will be in how these reforms are

implemented. Additionally, Pakistan's leaders still have to reduce corruption, to rebuild from last summer's floods, and to keep making progress in eliminating extremists and their sanctuaries. So we are focused on getting the Strategic Dialogue with Pakistan back on track.

We believe that the gains of the past two years on both sides of the border have created space for an Afghan-led reconciliation effort aimed at achieving a political settlement of the conflict that will isolate al-Qaeda and enhance regional stability. The United States supports this Afghan effort. Over the past two years, we have laid out our unambiguous red lines for reconciliation with the insurgents: They must renounce violence; they must abandon their alliance with al-Qaeda; and they must abide by the constitution of Afghanistan — including its protections for the rights of women. Those are necessary outcomes of any negotiation. Insurgents now face a clear choice – disown al-Qaeda and enter into a political process under Afghanistan's constitution or continue to face military pressure.

Our support for Afghan-led reconciliation reflects our core belief that the conflict will not be resolved through military means alone. President Karzai made a good start by convening a broad-based Peace Jirga in June 2010 that set out a framework for national reconciliation. He then formed a High Peace Council that includes men and women from across Afghanistan. Special Representative Marc Grossman is spearheading our support for this effort, including by conducting extensive regional and international consultations to build support for Karzai's outreach. We believe that all of Afghanistan's neighbors and near-neighbors – India and Iran, Russia and China, the Central Asian states – stand to benefit from a responsible political settlement in Afghanistan and also an end to al-Qaeda safe havens in the border areas and the export of extremism into their countries. That would reduce the terrorist and narcotics threat to their citizens, create new opportunities for commerce, and ease the free flow of energy and resources throughout the region. It could also help move other regional conflicts toward peaceful resolution.

All of Afghanistan's neighbors – including Pakistan, have legitimate concerns that should be understood and addressed by the Afghan government in any reconciliation process, with steps that provide transparency and reassurance. But they also have responsibilities, including respecting Afghan sovereignty – which means agreeing not to play out their rivalries within its borders – and working with Kabul to improve regional stability. Despite historic mistrust, we know cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan is possible, as they recently demonstrated by concluding a Transit Trade Agreement that had been in

negotiation since the 1960s. The agreement will boost economic opportunity on both sides of the border by opening new markets and trade routes for their goods.

Similarly, we are encouraged by resumption of dialogue between Pakistan and India and the positive steps taken by Prime Ministers Singh and Gilani last week as a part of cricket diplomacy. We look to them – and all of Afghanistan's neighbors – to help ensure that al-Qaeda and the syndicate of terrorism is denied safe haven everywhere.

Even as we support Afghan-led reconciliation and the transition process, the United States will relentlessly pursue al-Qaeda and Taliban who refuse to renounce violence. We have also launched negotiations on a new Strategic Partnership Declaration with Afghanistan. It will help Afghanistan improve cooperation with its neighbors, and provide a long-term framework for our bilateral cooperation in the areas of security, economic and social development, and institution building. This strengthened partnership will complement our Strategic Dialogue with Pakistan. The development of these relationships, along with our deepening engagement with key neighbors, is crucial to providing stability and confidence in the region.

Let me conclude by reiterating that the President's FY2012 budget request for Afghanistan and Pakistan is critical to the success of our military efforts. The success of counterinsurgency is based largely on the ability of civilian institutions – law enforcement, governance, development – to replace military forces as soon as security is restored. While tackling corruption is a challenge, we are working with our Afghan and Pakistani partners to ensure that U.S. tax dollars are utilized effectively and efficiently.

The Afghanistan request supports immediate stabilization programs – for example, the Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased Production in Afghanistan (AVIPA) program – as well as investments in infrastructure that are key to sustained economic growth and ensuring that the transition to Afghan-lead is irreversible. The Pakistan request reflects Congress' commitment to providing a long-term commitment to enhance Pakistan's stability by expanding the availability of electricity, stimulating economic opportunity, and improving provision of social services for the Pakistani people. Since passage of the Enhanced Partnership for Pakistan Act in October 2009, we have disbursed over \$1.5 billion in civilian assistance to Pakistan. This includes over \$500 million in emergency and flood assistance, and about \$1 billion for economic development. Among the high-impact, high visibility projects funded in recent months is renovations at the Gomal

Zam dam, which will increase energy production. Meanwhile, our security assistance request provides significant capital support for Pakistani military forces. It also funds the largest military-to-military exchange program in the world, and the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capabilities Fund (PCCF), which helps Pakistan combat insurgents.

Enduring partnerships with Afghanistan and Pakistan are vital to U.S. national interests and stability in South and Central Asia. There have been points in our history when we have disengaged from Pakistan and Afghanistan with disastrous results; we cannot afford to make that mistake again.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to answering your questions

**Dan Feldman** is one of three Deputies to the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He previously served as a partner in the international Corporate Social Responsibility ("CSR") group at the law firm Foley Hoag LLP, the only CSR legal practice in the U.S. His previous government experience includes serving as Director of Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs at the National Security Council in the Clinton Administration, where he was responsible for global human rights issues, and as Counsel and Communications Adviser to the U.S. Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. He acted as Senior Foreign Policy and National Security Advisor to the Kerry presidential campaign in 2004, and also as communications advisor to the Gore campaign in 2000. He helped to found, and subsequently served on the board of, the National Security Network. He has been appointed a White House Fellow and a Henry Luce Scholar, and was a law clerk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and on the South African Supreme (Constitutional) Court. He is a graduate of Tufts University, Columbia Law School, and Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School.